



TOLL BRIDGE PROGRAM OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

CALTRANS BAY AREA TOLL AUTHORITY CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Toll Bridge Program Oversight Committee
Department of Transportation
Office of the Director
1120 N Street
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February 6, 2013

The Honorable Mark DeSaulnier
Chairman
Senate Transportation and Housing Committee
State Capitol, Room 2209
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman DeSaulnier:

Thank you for your letter of January 7th requesting \$100,000 for the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) to conduct a review of the new east span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. We also appreciated the opportunity to meet with you on January 29th to understand further your intent in seeking this review and how we might be helpful in carrying it out.

We noted in the meeting our willingness to provide toll bridge seismic retrofit program funds up to the amount you requested for the LAO review, and we confirm that commitment with this letter. We also mutually agreed on the importance of completing this review well in advance of the scheduled opening of the new east span over Labor Day weekend later this year.

Given these budget and schedule parameters, we believe it is essential that the scope of the LAO review (1) focus on the questions your committee has raised regarding construction of the east span suspension tower, and (2) rely to the greatest extent possible on documents already developed by Caltrans and reviews already conducted by agencies and groups external to the department. On the first point, this would concentrate the LAO inquiry principally on testing protocols and practices related to the tower foundation for the suspended portion of the new east span. On the second point, a productive approach might be for the LAO to conduct a "review of reviews" of the work performed by the toll bridge program's Seismic Safety Peer Review Panel (published in March 2012) and the Federal Highway Administration (to be published in February 2013).

As we outlined in our meeting with you and your staff, the new east span has been the subject of countless internal and external reviews throughout its lengthy design and construction history on subjects ranging from the original bridge type selection to the span's ground motion and wind load characteristics to recent challenges in orthotropic box girder welding and cable installation. We certainly agree with your letter that "[i]t is in everyone's interest that we resolve any

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outstanding questions relating to the safety of the new bridge." At the same time, a multitude of questions about the new east span have been asked and answered repeatedly over the past 15 years, and it is time to bring the debates to a close and open our new bridge.

We assure you and the LAO of the full cooperation of the Toll Bridge Program Oversight Committee (TBPOC) and our joint staff. We look forward to the prompt completion of this review.

Sincerely,



STEVE HEMINGER
TBPOC Chair
Executive Director
Bay Area Toll Authority



BIMLA G. RHINEHART
TBPOC Vice-Chair
Executive Director
California Transportation Commission



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